

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 ISO-00 IO-04 OMB-01 AID-05 OIC-02 SAB-01

SAM-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-04

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3588

INFO ARAB SUMMIT CONFERENCE 09

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR XF MO

SUBJECT: ARAB SUMMIT: FOREIGN MINISTERS' ACTIVITIES OCT 23

1. SUMMARY. PALESTINIAN QUESTION REMAINED ON CENTER STAGE DURING SECOND DAY OF FON MINS' CONFERENCE OCT 23. PLO REPORTEDLY PRESSED HARD FOR REAFFIRMATION OF STATUS OF SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIANS. AT SAME TIME, JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN CONTACTS SEEN AS JUSTIFYING SOME OPTIMISM. A MODERATE PLO STRATEGY AT UNGA ALSO REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED. END SUMMARY

2. ACCORDING TO SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS COVERAGE OF FON MINS' SECOND DAY OF DISCUSSIONS OCT 23, FOCUS CONTINUED ON PALESTINIAN QUESTION. EIGHT-COUNTRY WORKING COMMITTEE (RABAT 5170) ALSO PURSUED DETAILED DISCUSSION OF SUMMIT AGENDA, WHICH, IN CURRENT SHAPE, IS TO INCLUDE FIVE PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS:

(A) EXAMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL AND ARAB SITUATION.

(B) INTER-ARAB MILITARY COORDINATION.

(C) PAN-ARAB ECONOMIC COOPERATION.

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(D) REVIEW OF ARAB ACTION IN LIGHT OF ALGIERS SUMMIT

RESOLUTIONS.

(E) FIXING OF DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SUMMIT.

ARAB-AFRICAN AND ARAB-EUROPEAN RELATIONS ALSO TO FIGURE IN AGENDA.

3. SYRIAN REPRESENTATIVE KHADDAM MADE PRESENTATION BEFORE WORKING COMMITTEE ON SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST SINCE OCTOBER WAR AND ITS MILITARY CONSEQUENCES. SYRIAN REPORTEDLY SAID HE HAD LITTLE OPTIMISM WITH RESPECT TO QUICK REALIZATION OF ARAB-PALESTINIAN ASPIRATIONS, GIVEN PERSISTENCE OF ISRAEL IN ITS REFUSAL TO EVACUATE OCCUPIED TERRITORY AND IMPORTANT FINANCIAL AND MILITARY AID ISRAEL CONTINUING TO RECEIVE FROM ITS WESTERN ALLIES. "IT IS A BIT OF AN IMPASSE," HE QUOTED AS COMMENTING.

4. EGYPTIAN FON MIN FAHMY REPORTEDLY DISCRIBED ATTEMPTS TO PREVENT GENEVA CONFERENCE FROM RESUMING ITS WORK. HOWEVER, NOTE OF OPTIMISM WAS ATTRIBUTED TO FAHMY REGARDING OUTCOME OF FORTHCOMING MISSION BY SECRETARY KISSINGER IN MIDDLE EAST, "WHICH SHOULD LEAD TO A NEW WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES." FAHMY ALSO SAW SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN COORDINATION AS "PERFECT," STRESSING THAT NO PARTIAL AGREEMENT WOULD BE MADE TO THE DETRIMENT OF EITHER PARTY NOR PALESTINIAN INTERESTS.

5. PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION QUESTION WAS REPORTEDLY SUBJECT OF LONG, OCCASIONALLY STORMY DEBATE BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND JORDANIANS. PLO REAFFIRMED ITS POSITION IT SHOULD BE SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL PALESTINIANS. JORDANIANS SAID TO HAVE MAINTAINED VIEW GOJ SHOULD REPRESENT PALESTINIANS OF JORDAN. SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS COMMENTS THAT IT WOULD BE MISTAKE, HOWEVER, THINK THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND JORDANIANS HAVE REACHED POINT OF NO RETURN. PRESS UNDERLINES THAT DURING FON MINISTER'S LUNCH OCT 23 FOR ARAB DELEGATIONS, JORDANIAN PRIME MIN RIFAI AND PLO REPRESENTATIVE FAROUQ QADUMI WERE ENGAGED IN CONVERSATION WHICH HAD APPEARANCE OF "GREAT CORDIALITY." THIS PUBLIC MANIFESTATION, PRESS COMMENTED, HAD EASED ATMOSPHERE AFTER SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT MORNING DISCUSSIONS. DURING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AFTERNOON SESSION, PRESS CONTINUED, THERE WERE CERTAIN INDICATIONS OF A "MAJOR CHANGE" IN JORDANIAN POSITION; ARAB DELEGATIONS WERE CONVINCED THAT ARAB SUMMIT WOULD CONFIRM PLO IN ROLE OF SOLE REPRESENTATIVE, AS IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR JORDANIANS NOT TO RECOGNIZE PLO IN THIS CAPACITY AFTER 105 UN MEMBERS HAD ALREADY DONE SO.

6. ACCORDING TO JOURNALISTS COVERING CONFERENCE, MIN INFO

BENHIMA COMMENTED THAT OCT 23 WORKING GROUP SESSION
ALSO DISCUSSED A PLO STRATEGY OF MODERATION AT UNGA.
SUCH STRATEGY DESIGNED TO GAIN MAXIMUM SUPPORT AND NOT
LOSE, THROUGH RADICAL APPROACH, "BENEFITS ALREADY GAINED."
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